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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 9229
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1795
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY 5895
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 003470

SIPDIS

NSC FOR DENNIS WILDER AND LIZ PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/25/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: PEACEFUL PROTESTS CONTINUE AT BANGKOK AIRPORT,
MILITARY HQ

REF: A. BANGKOK 3454 (DEMO STARTS STRONG)

[1](#)B. BANGKOK 3080 (QUEEN SUPPORTS PROTESTS)

Classified By: DCM James F. Entwistle, reason: 1.4 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Several thousand anti-government People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) supporters continued to demonstrate peacefully at Bangkok's Don Muang (domestic) airport on November 25, without disrupting airport operations. While most PAD sympathizers appear intent on remaining at Don Muang until at least November 26, thousands moved in the mid-afternoon to the Royal Thai Armed Forces Supreme Command headquarters, seemingly to complain about the Army's refusal to intervene against the government on PAD's behalf. Army Commander Anupong Paojinda reiterated publicly that the Army will not stage a coup but will help to keep order and seek to prevent rival groups from clashing. In the late afternoon, it appeared that the crowd at the Supreme Command headquarters was dispersing, and many PAD supporters were heading to Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi (international) airport. We are monitoring the situation there and will issue warden messages, as necessary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Parliamentary opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva has expressed willingness to act as a mediator between the RTG and the PAD, according to media reports. The PAD seems to have rebuffed this prospect, insisting Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat must resign. Somchai has publicly reaffirmed his intent to remain in office; he is scheduled to return from the APEC summit in Peru on November 26. PAD appears likely to try to confront Somchai on his return.

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: The RTG continues to show extraordinary tolerance of the PAD's activities, including the group's four month occupation of the Government House compound, the official seat of government. In this latest street action (begun November 24 -- ref A), the PAD has used incendiary rhetoric, but its actions have been relatively restrained compared to greater aggression in late August and early October. With a number of media outlets increasingly critical of the PAD and no clear path to achieve its goal of ousting the government, it is unclear whether this round of demonstrations will remain restrained and taper off, or whether significant escalation lies ahead.

JOHN